

until he left England I often met him. He treated me with so much respect — I had almost said reverence — that I, being a somewhat modest and retired man, thought at first that he was quizzing me, but I soon found that I did him injustice. The fact is my works being all about the feelings of literary men were exceedingly interesting to him. They contained knowledge which he could get nowhere else. It was all new to him. He told me that he had read my works over and over again. I thought this, of course, a compliment, but some years afterwards found it to be true.

D'Israeli in his turn was of course not behindhand in appreciation of the poet, and his son grew to manhood in a household where the name of Byron was always held in reverence. Yet in spite of this it is hard to believe that the father was really in sympathy with the romantic movement of the day. His true idol was Pope, and in the Aristotle complexion of his mind we find an affinity with the eighteenth century rather than with the nineteenth. The son was more deeply penetrated with the spirit of the later time; and he had the demonic force which his father lacked and which that spirit calls for or inspires in its votaries. Yet we shall find, as we proceed, in subtle combination with very different matter, a certain eighteenth century element in the intellect of the son which, unless we are to explain it by direct inheritance from

his father, was doubtless the result of early education and of constant intercourse during the impressionable age with a mind originally cast in the eighteenth century mould.

Isaac ^Israeli's works, especially the *Curiosities*, still have their readers, but his reputation has hardly rested at the level to which it rose during his life. It is as the father; of his son that he now mainly interests us, and as a capital influence in the formation of that son's mind and character. Superficially the resemblance is slight between the student recluse buried in his books and the statesman who through the turmoil of public life forced his way to fame and honour, and the son was well aware that his father never fully understood him; yet he